



# STATE SENATOR PAT MILLER

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## Fellow Taxpayers:

Please note that to cut costs I have reduced the size of this post-session newsletter. For additional information visit my Web site, e-mail me at [Senator.Miller@iga.in.gov](mailto:Senator.Miller@iga.in.gov) or call.

**Pat**

[WWW.IN.GOV/SENATOR.MILLER](http://WWW.IN.GOV/SENATOR.MILLER)

## SEN. MILLER: BILLS I SUPPORTED THIS SESSION

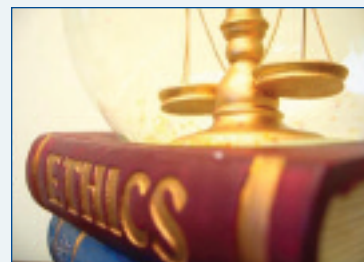
✓ **Child Support:** In an effort to collect more than \$2 billion in overdue child support payments, lawmakers passed a bill to withhold casino winnings from those who ignore their court-ordered obligations. The Indiana Department of Child Services estimates more than 165,000 "deadbeat parents" each owe more than \$2,000 in support payments. Colorado passed a similar law in July.

✓ **Voting Accessibility:** I sponsored legislation making voting easier for those with disabilities and military personnel serving our country overseas. The new



law ensures disabled voters have access to private, independent voting methods when casting ballots early or absentee as they do when voting on Election Day. It also provides more options for military personnel to cast their votes when serving overseas.

✓ **Government Ethics:** Legislators passed comprehensive ethics reform legislation, which I wrote and sponsored, creating a one-year cooling-off period before a retired legislator could become a lobbyist and requiring uniform reporting by all lobbyists.



Universities and state agencies who hire individuals to lobby on their behalf must now file reports. Fines for lobbyists who fail to file reports on time have been increased.

✓ **Gun Rights:** The names, addresses and other identifying information of more than 300,000 Hoosiers with handgun licenses – also referred to as concealed carry permits – will be confidential, like tax records. The legislation prohibits most businesses from enacting policies that prevent licensed gun owners from keeping legal firearms in their locked vehicles out of sight.



# SEN. PAT MILLER

SERVING SENATE DISTRICT 32 TAXPAYERS



## **JOBS:** LAWMAKERS FOUGHT ADDITIONAL SPENDING; PASSED PRO-JOBS INITIATIVES TO HELP HOOSIERS

**W**ith little time and no money, lawmakers worked diligently this short session to maintain Indiana's pro-business climate.

Legislators kept a close, careful eye on proposed legislation and amendments to avoid increased state expenditures and government intervention that could have raised taxes and imposed red tape during already hard times for Indiana's workforce and employers.

The governor rightly reacted to tumbling state revenues by cutting government spending, flat-lining state payrolls and freezing all but essential hiring. To date, state agencies have cut 20 percent from operating budgets. Reluctantly, higher education funding has been reduced 6 percent and public K-12 schools – nearly half of the state budget – have been asked to find 3 percent in new cost savings and efficiencies to help save classroom teachers' jobs.

Legislators successfully delayed \$400 million in new unemployment insurance premiums from going into effect in 2010. By avoiding premium increases, lawmakers hope employers large

and small will be in stronger positions to retain or add employees.

Lawmakers also passed initiatives to help Hoosiers recover from the national recession:



- **New Employer Tax Credits** will be offered to businesses relocating or incorporating in Indiana. Qualified businesses must hire 10 or more full-time employees, not including owners.

- **Small Business Tax Credits** will be expanded to make small employers with fewer than 35 workers eligible for Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) credits.

- **Small Business Ombudsman** will be an advocate for small employers with state agencies, helping navigate regulations, streamline paperwork and coordinate due dates. The ombudsman will monitor outdated, ineffective and overly burdensome reporting requests and red tape.

- **H.I.R.E.** (Helping Indiana Re-start Employment) initiative will offer tax incentives to employers who hire and train unemployed and underemployed Hoosiers.

## PROPERTY TAX CAPS

Hoosier voters on November 2 during the general election will determine if permanent caps on property tax rates will be added to Indiana's Constitution.

Lawmakers gave final approval for Hoosiers to determine whether to constitutionally cap property tax rates at 1 percent for owner-occupied homes, 2 percent for other residential and agricultural properties and 3 percent for businesses. This action sets the stage to

make these 1-2-3 caps part of the constitution.

Capping property taxes is in response to the 2007 property tax crisis. Lawmakers remembered that many Hoosiers suffered from life-changing decisions. Legislators have once again sided with taxpayers and not tax spenders – keeping the promise of permanent property tax relief and reform.

Please place your vote on whether to add the tax caps to the constitution on Nov. 2.

## EDUCATION

Lawmakers provided schools more financial flexibility and local control. Steps to address social promotion of students not reading at grade level were taken.

Now, schools can transfer up to 5 percent of funding normally dedicated to other projects and use it for general fund purposes. Schools agreeing to pay freezes for staff, excluding those for years of experience and new degrees, can transfer up to 10 percent. By allowing ac-

cess to these resources, money will be available to help schools prevent teacher layoffs and preserve instructional programs.

Local schools now have the option to budget on the calendar year or change to the state's fiscal year, July 1 – June 30.

A new statewide plan to improve reading performance among grade-school students is required with input being sought through public hearings.